

In Memory
of
Emil Mollenhauer



WORDS SPOKEN AT

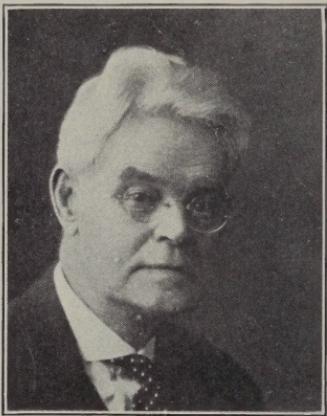
HIS FUNERAL

December 12, 1927

BY

COURTENAY GUILD





EMIL MOLLENHAUER

1855-1927

"What is this that breaks my singing,
Breaks the power of my voice so clear,
Dooms to silence my melody?
It once did flow like the river.
Once it roared like the rushing wave,
Rose and fell like ocean's music.
Sorrow has destroyed my singing.
It is sorrow that breaks my voice.
Sorrow steals all my song away.
No more it flows like a river
Rolls no more like the rushing wave
No more swells like ocean's music.
Sorrow has destroyed my singing,
Sorrow steals all my song away."

"Where be the waters to drown regret?
Where be the leaves of sleep's own tree?
Nowhere else in the world—nor yet in Picardy."

"Immortal spirit of song! Thou mighty power,
Inspiring us to greatest sacrifice,
Thy notes at last, sung by celestial choir
Shall greet us at the gates of Paradise."

"Oft when in twilight winging
So softly down, the day is still,
Within my ear a song is singing
That all my soul doth trembling thrill.
E'en though I can remember never
Who sang that ancient lay to me,
Yet in my heart shall sound forever
That soulful melody.
His almighty favor
Be thy loving guide,
Shelter thee now and ever
Where thou dost abide."

"See, the evening shades are closing
O'er the tired earth reposing,
And the work of day is done.
Hark! the bells that say, 'Content thee!'
Fold thy hands for rest is sent thee.
Send thy peace O God of Love,
On thy children from above.

"See the woods are sunk in shadow
Till the moonlight gilds the meadow
And reveals our welcome home.
Now the chime of bells is over,
In my sleep their tones shall hover.
Lord of all, oh, in thy sight.
Keep us through the silent night."



THESE LINES that I have just read, and also the two verses with which I shall close my remarks, are all taken from songs that have been sung by the Apollo Club in concerts within the past few years under the direction of our Conductor, Mr. Mollenhauer.

Friends of Emil Mollenhauer, we have come to this place to pay a tribute of respect and affection to the memory of a man who has been an honored leader in his profession for a generation.

Our religion tells us that this is not a time for lamenting, for confident in a glorious life to come, we know that our friend has gone before us on the road we shall all travel after him.

If a man were asked what he would like to leave behind as a record of his life, he could hardly ask more than that he should have had a long, happy, and useful life; to live respected and die regretted. The law of life is labor. The joy of life is accomplishment, and fortunate is he who is happy and successful in his chosen labor.

Emil Mollenhauer, whom we affectionately called "The Governor", has had a long, happy, and useful life, and his leadership has had a prominent part in the performance of good music in Boston for the past three decades.

As a conductor he has given musical instruction to thousands who have sung or played under his baton, and hundreds of thousands of music lovers have had their lives brightened by listening to music produced under his direction.

Although born in New York, he had made Boston his home for many years, and his prominence as a conductor was in connection with organizations in or near this city. In 1915 he travelled to the Pacific Coast, and contributed to the musical reputation of our city by a series of band concerts by the Boston Band at the Panama Exposition in San Francisco.

He was gifted with absolute pitch, and could readily sound any note within the compass of his voice without recourse to pitch pipe or any musical instrument.

In boyhood he was regarded as an infant prodigy, playing both piano and violin. In early manhood he played in the orchestra of Theodore Thomas in New York, and later came to Boston to conduct a theatre orchestra. For a number of years he was a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Wm. Gericke, for whom he had great respect and affection.

Although notably successful as a conductor of bands and orchestras, it was as conductor of singing societies that he is remembered by many of us. In October, 1899, he became conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society, the oldest large chorus in America, and his work was so highly regarded that he was offered and accepted the position of conductor of the Apollo Club of Boston in 1901.

Enthusiastic in his work, he was able to impart his enthusiasm to the men and women whom he led. After a concert a man was heard to say: "I thought I was singing as loud as I could, but when the Governor signalled for more power, I found I could sing twice as loud as I had been singing before."

In rehearsals when the first note of a chorus came on the second beat of a measure, he would always say "one" to prepare the singers for their entrance on the next beat. In the Messiah and other works that he has taught us to sing, we shall for the rest of our lives think "one", if we do not say it, whenever we sing a chorus where he was accustomed to give us the signal in that way for entrance on the second beat: "One! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

He always insisted on promptness of attack when conducting a chorus. At rehearsals if the attack was not prompt and vigorous at the opening of a number, he would stop the singers and make them begin again, sometimes

making them repeat the first measure three or four times, or until they sang to his satisfaction.

The promptness that he required in others he exemplified himself. In twenty-eight years I never knew him to be late at a rehearsal nor absent from a concert that he was to conduct. His punctuality did not consist merely of arriving one minute before the rehearsal hour, for he would come a quarter hour or a half hour before the time, to afford opportunity before rehearsal for conference with officers or others who wished to consult him. Thus he gave full measure, heaped up and running over.

Let no man believe that such punctuality and regularity were easily attained. Many a time our conductor was enduring severe pain when conducting a rehearsal. When another man would be in bed under the care of a doctor, his interest in his work and his sense of duty were so strong that he preferred to endure suffering rather than be absent from his post.

As the years passed he conducted with all the vigor of his younger days, but it became evident that the work made heavy demands on his vitality, and his friends saw that the burden was becoming too heavy. At the completion of 25 years as conductor of the Apollo Club he was voted a year's leave of absence, together with the regular honorarium for the year. At the end of another year, in May, 1927, he did not feel equal to the task of conducting two large musical clubs for another season, and asked that his name be not proposed for election as conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society or of the Apollo Club for another year. His wishes were followed. He was elected Conductor Emeritus of both organizations, and we hoped to have him with us as friend and adviser for many years. But it was not to be, for two days ago we got the sad news that he had gone to rest from all earthly labor.

The words spoken of another musician may well be said of him: "During his long term of service as a conductor he heard many great artists sing or play in concerts under his baton, but not one of them was a greater artist than the conductor himself."

The warm affection in which he was held by the Handel and Haydn Society was manifest at every rehearsal as well as at every concert of the Society in recent years, for when he made his entrance at the beginning of a concert, or after an intermission at a rehearsal, his appearance was always the signal for hearty applause. When the sad news came to us, the Society was preparing for the presentation to him of a gift next week as a token of respect and affection. They had already made him an honorary member and presented a loving cup to him at the Centenary Concert in 1915.

I had the good fortune to sing under his direction for twenty-eight years in the Handel and Haydn Society and twenty-two as President of the Apollo Club, and I can say as Marc Antony said of Caesar "he was my friend, faithful and just to me".

While we mourn his passing from this life, we rejoice in the memory that our lives have been made happier by his work and by his friendship.



"The crimson sunset faded into gray.
Upon the murmurous sea the twilight fell.
The last warm breath of the delicious day
Passed with a mute farewell.
Above my head, in the soft purple sky
A wild note sounded like a shrill-voiced bell.
Three gulls met, wheeled, and parted with a cry
That seemed to say 'Farewell.'

"Farewell, I thought, it is the earth's one speech
All human voices the sad chorus swell
Though mighty Love to Heaven's high gate may reach,
Yet must he say 'Farewell.'
'Farewell, farewell!' From wave to wave 'tis tossed.
From wind to wind, earth has one tale to tell.
All other sounds are dulled and drowned and lost,
In this one cry 'Farewell.' "

